



Peace Corps

Serving in eSwatini

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Peace Corps

Country /City

By the invitation of King Mswati III, in 2016, home became this small village somewhere southeast of Swaziland where as a Youth Development volunteer I was to help with the mitigation of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Here, the wind passionately dances away time. As it bends trees to worship, you'd think an ocean is reuniting with its shore. There are chickens with freakishly long legs; pigs mating under mango trees; and cows holding up traffic.

Choice

As initially a Peace Corps Ecuador candidate, my service thankfully did not transpire how I had envisioned it. There were one too many growing pains, that in retrospect I'm grateful for. I'd do it all over again.



Placement/Project Information

Projects undertaken during my service were carried out at the request of locals who saw a need for training workshops that could build upon existing skills, address gaps in knowledge as well as equip care providers with the most recent and best practices for safe and effective care.

Agency/Community Partner

My projects involved mainly working with care providers such as Rural Health Motivators, GLOW counselors, pre-school teachers, high school and primary school teachers.

Outcomes

Some of my projects within my community involved partnering with the Ministry of Health, and the American Embassy to carry out a refresher training for 29 Rural Health Motivators (RHMs) as certified health professionals were far and few in between due to its remoteness and inaccessibility. I also partnered with the Ministry of Education, and Clown Without Borders, to provide a refresher Early Childhood Education training and trunks of teaching aids for 8 pre schools. Nationally, I along with 3 other volunteers directed Girls Leading Our World (GLOW) clubs. We worked with partnering organizations to capacitate through a number of national trainings, and events the 70 local Swazi (GLOW counselors) women who ran the GLOW clubs in their respective communities. I also taught English, as well as life skills at both the local High School and Primary School.

Skills Utilized/ Developed

Skills I particularly cultivated during my service are community organization, networking and grant writing.

Classroom Connections

SW697 (Community and Social System) for example in teaching us ways to work in partnership with the primary and secondary mediating structures in communities, such as schools, local organizations, etc.

Lessons Learned

I have learned that no matter the socioeconomical or environmental challenges of a community, there will always be a resource in human capital that can be tapped into. I have learned to always see clients as pairs of capable hands and *not* mouths to feed. Lastly, no matter your educational or professional attainment, you will learn as much from them as they will from you, if not more.



Career Connections

I have long taken interest in international development especially as a Haitian living abroad, but my service in eSwatini has confirmed that.

Advice

1. Go with an open mind and a teachable spirit
2. Don't be afraid of the unfamiliar, embrace it!

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